

PRESS RELEASE

Angela Bulloch

Entropy

September 12 – October 23, 2026

Opening on Friday, September 11, 12 – 9 pm

Artist talk with Angela Bulloch & Lynn Kost, Tuesday, September 22, 6.30 – 7.30 pm

Lichtenfelsgasse 5, A-1010 Vienna

Galerie Eva Presenhuber is pleased to present *Entropy*, the gallery's fifth solo exhibition with the Berlin-based British artist Angela Bulloch.

From the early 1990s, Bulloch glimpsed the twenty-first century. The central subject of her work is the condition of the human being caught within an automated society—a theme considered irrelevant by her peers at the time. While her fellow YBAs (Young British Artists) were perpetuating issues related to consumer society, tinged with the "sensational," Bulloch was addressing questions far from this mainstream: the notion of individual choice, the absurdity of a world dehumanized by robotics, and the dwindling nature of human freedom. In 1991, with *King of Comedy*, she was already using interactivity to confront the viewer with social determinism—a phenomenon that, over the past thirty years, has only grown and diversified its grip. Designed as a dead end, the installation immersed the spectator in the frozen image of a crowd, waiting to applaud an absent figure.

Today, her work employs virtual reality, QR codes, 3D animations or 3D star mapping programs. Yet, it is the *Rule Series* that, in my view, forms the backbone of her practice and defines its scope. For over thirty years, Bulloch has collected internal regulations, displayed in various forms (from wall drawings to photocopies), which pertain as much to the corporate world as to the universe itself: the latter is governed by the second law of thermodynamics, while a hair salon is ruled by a set of arbitrary rules. But in both cases, the human being is caught in processes beyond their control.

Since 1993, the *Rule Series* has been based on a selection of instructions and excerpts from manuals, ranging from the proper way to prepare tea to the principles to be observed in a strip club or the internal regulations of an airline. By extracting this material from its original context, Bulloch describes human nature as a process of submission to laws and rules, and a society that ceaselessly produces mechanisms of regulation, control, and sanction. What her work reveals is a reality in which the options presented to us are mere simulacra: her exhibitions can be compared to soft dystopias. Slavoj Žižek compared liberal democracy to elevator buttons: engineers make us believe that pressing the "close door" button speeds up the process, and this placebo reassures us with an illusion of control, but the elevator doors are pre-programmed. This illusion of interaction represents the central intuition of her work: Bulloch insists that "individual choices are all more or less insignificant, as the artwork itself has already defined the parameters of choice."

The omnipresence of control: one could speak of a blind panopticon, which no longer even needs to observe us to guide us. Some of Bulloch's machines produce shapes triggered by the passage of visitors (such as *Betaville*, 1996), or the sounds they make, or the act of sitting on a bench. But the concept of interaction is just one figure among many. Her *Pixel Boxes* are wooden and translucent plastic boxes, each containing three fluorescent tubes (red, blue, green) capable of generating an infinite variety of colors (16 million, the same number as a standard computer screen). These individual cubes serve as modular bases for diverse assemblies, from columns to cinema screens, all referring to an invisible source image for the viewer, who is placed in front of a kind of giant pixel extracted from an absent totality.

This systemic approach, and the use of geometry, anchors Bulloch in the formal family of minimal art; but here, the minimalist aesthetic is returned to its social dimension—that of the urban grid and social rationalization. From this perspective, Bulloch's work could be compared to that of Cuban artist Félix González-Torres: both, in the early

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1990s, practiced a form of post-production art, recharging the forms of the 1960s and 1970s avant-gardes with new content, thus inventing a new relationship with art history: using it as a toolbox.

Nicolas Bourriaud

Angela Bulloch was born in 1966 in Rainy River, Canada, and lives and works in Berlin. Her first solo exhibition with Eva Presenhuber took place at Galerie Walcheturm, Zurich (1996). In recent years, she had solo exhibitions at institutions including Musée d'Arts de Nantes, Nantes, FR (2022); Museum of Art, Architecture and Technology, Lisbon, PT (2019); Sharjah Art Museum, Sharjah, UAE (2016); Witte de With Center for Contemporary Art, Rotterdam, NL (2012); Städtische Galerie Wolfsburg, Wolfsburg, DE (2011); and Lenbachhaus, Munich, DE (2008). She participated in group shows at institutions including Langen Foundation, Neuss, DE (2025); Boros Foundation, Berghain, Berlin, DE (2020); Sculpture Milwaukee, Milwaukee, WI, US (2019); mumok, Vienna, AT (2018); Consortium Museum, Dijon, FR (2016); Palais de Tokyo, Paris, FR (2015); Kunstmuseum Bonn, Bonn, DE (2015); The Guggenheim Abu Dhabi, UAE (2014); and Migros Museum für Gegenwartskunst, Zurich, CH (2013), among others. Bulloch's work is represented in major museums and private collections worldwide, including Lenbachhaus, Munich; Kunstmuseum, Bonn; Tate, London; Consortium Museum, Dijon; Albright Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo; De Pont, Tilburg, and the Guggenheim Abu Dhabi.

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